

The Department of Music
of
The University of Alberta
presents

THE MADRIGAL SINGERS

with

ELSIE ACHUFF, *soprano*

ERNESTO LEJANO *and* GRANT MAXWELL, *piano*

LEONARD RATZLAFF, *conductor*

Thursday, March 17, 1983 at 8:00 p.m.
Convocation Hall, Old Arts Building

Three Madrigals. Thomas Morley
Sing we and chant it (The First Booke of Balletts to (1557-1602)
Five Voyces, 1595)
April is in my mistress' face (Madrigals to Foure Voyces, 1594)
Now is the month of maying (1595)

Dessus le marché d'Arras anon.: before 1528
Dessus le marché d'Arras (Six gaillards et
six pavans, 1528) Adrian Willaert
(ca. 1490-1562)

Dessus le marché d'Arras (Continuation
du Mellange d'Orlande de Lassus...., 1584). Orlando di Lasso
(1532-1594)
Magnificat in the First Tone on "Dessus
le marché d'Arras" (Patrocinium Musices, 1587). Orlando di Lasso

Shema Yisroael (Two Sacred Motets, 1979) Alfred Fisher
(b. 1942)

Elsie Achuff, soprano

INTERVAL

Neue Liebeslieder, Op. 65 (1875) Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)
1. Verzicht, o Herz, auf Rettung
2. Finstere Schatten der Nacht
3. An jeder Hand die Finger
4. Ihr schwarzen Augen, ihr durft nur winken

5. Wahre, wahre deinen Sohn
6. Rosen steckt mir an die Mutter
7. Vom Gebirge Well' auf Well'
8. Weiche Gräser im Revier
9. Nagen am Herzen
10. Ich kose süß mit der und der
11. Alles, alles in den Wind
12. Schwarzer Wald, dein Schatten
13. Nein, Geliebter, setze dich mir
14. Flammenauge, dunkles Haar
15. Zum Schluss: Nun, ihr Musen, genug!
Ernesto Lejano and Grant Maxwell, piano

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA MADRIGAL SINGERS

Soprano

Donna Abbey-Colborne
Jane Hartling
Marla Sartison
Shauna Still

Alto

Sherilyn Fritz
Lori Nowochin
Elizabeth Raycroft
Shannon Wilkinson

Tenor

David Bacon
Neal Evans
Richard Hurlbut
Trent Worthington

Bass

Jon Eriksson
Scott Hafso
David Zacharko

PROGRAMME NOTES

Of the three well-known madrigals which open the programme, only the second is an original composition by Morley. The other two may more accurately be described as English 'arrangements' of popular Italian balletti by Giovanni Gastoldi and Orazio Vecchi, published by Morley at the height of the Italian madrigal's popularity in England. A distinctive feature of the balletti is their rhythmically energetic refrain on the syllables 'fa-la-la'.

The sequence of works by Willaert and di Lasso aptly illustrates a common compositional device in Renaissance music, whereby composers would use earlier works as models for their own. The device, known as 'parody technique', may seem somewhat plagiaristic to our modern sensibilities, but it is more likely that the practice of borrowing from another composer was looked upon as an apt way of honouring his work.

Willaert's setting of the original monophonic model is in four parts; Lasso's chanson setting expands to six parts. Both are faithful to the rough, bawdy flavour of the text.

Of Lasso's 105 Magnificat settings, over 40 employ parody technique. Lasso followed common practice by setting only the even-numbered verses: the odd-numbered verses are sung in plainsong chant. This setting is a parody of his own chanson setting, although the model is clearly seen only in the first and last verses. More significant is the complete transformation in response to the text in the other verses, from the powerful 'Fecit potentiam' to the quietly moving 'Sicut locutus est'.

The sacred motet Shema Yisroael, by Alfred Fisher, Chairman of the Theory and Composition Division at the University of Alberta, is scored for a cappella choir, soprano solo and crotales (small cymbals). It was written in memory of Asher Ginzberg (1856-1927), a writer and Zionist philosopher born of a hasidic family in the Ukraine, who wrote under the pen-name of Ahad Ha'am. A brilliant talmudist, Ginzberg viewed the Jewish people as a collective unit, a "national ego" endowed with a will to survive, a creative urge, and a cultural-spiritual personality.

The text of Shema Yisroael combines the Hebrew text, from Deuteronomy 6:4-5, with its English translation. Because of its emphasis on the unity of God, the Shema is considered the Jewish 'confession of faith', and is a vital part of the liturgy. Its words "Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One" are a quantitative and qualitative declaration of the oneness of the Lord, and provide the very basis for Judaism.

The motet exploits a wide range of choral sonorities, extending from unison or musical consonance (a musical metaphor for 'oneness'), marked by the ringing of the crotales, to unrest or musical dissonance, marked by contrapuntal treatment that creates dissonant intervals and quartal harmonies.

The Neue Liebeslieder, Op. 65, are the second cycle of waltzes by Johannes Brahms (1833-1897), for four-handed piano accompaniment and four-part chorus (SATB). This set was written in 1874 after he was appointed artistic director of Vienna's Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (The Friends of Music Society). Along with the Op. 52 collection, these fifteen waltzes pay homage to Brahms' chosen homeland, the Austro-Hungarian empire, and its waltz-capital, Vienna.

The lyrics of the Neue Liebeslieder were written by a contemporary German poet and schoolmaster from Würzburg, Georg Friedrich Daumer (1800-1875). Many scholars agree that Brahms had an unfortunate taste for second-rate, sentimental poetry; Daumer, who is mentioned only in comprehensive studies of German literature, would have been forgotten. Perhaps to keep critics content, Brahms used the final lines of Johann Wolfgang Goethe's elegy Alexis und Dora, a lengthy poem cherished by the German people, for the final song. A satisfying, chaconne-like conclusion results; passion subsides to dignity and inward contentment.

It was natural for Brahms to take interest in one kind of music that might have seemed too insignificant to others--Viennese waltzes, especially those written by Johann Strauss II. (He frequently visited the palatial summer home of the wealthy "Waltz King.") of course Brahms was no ordinary composer of light dance music; employing his refined compositional style, he not only creates a sense of variety, but also a wealth of warm and fresh detail. Eric Sams writes: "In these masterpieces the piano-duet accompaniments are so rich in contrapuntal detail and melodic and tonal invention that they can be played as separate works. The music is deeply serious but at the same time light and playful, combining vocal and instrumental genres in a technical and emotional tour de force."

Grant Maxwell and Leonard Ratzlaff

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Dessus le marché d'Arras

Dessus le marché d'Arras
(Mireli, mirela, bon pas)
J'ai trouvé un espagnart
(Sentin, senta, sur le bon bas).
Mireli, mirela, bon bille,
Mireli, mirela, bon bas.

Il m'a dit: fille, écoute
(Mireli,...)
De l'argent on vous donnera
(Sentin,...)
Mireli ...

-anon.

Magnificat

Magnificat anima mea Dominum.

Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo
salutari meo.

Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae
suae: ecce enim ex hoc beatam me
dicent omnes generationes.

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens
est: et sanctum nomen ejus.

Et misericordia ejus a progenie in
progenies timentibus eum.

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo: dis-
persit superbos mente cordis sui.

Deposuit potentes de sede, et ex-
altavit humiles.

Esurientes implevit bonis: et divites
dimisit inanes.

Suscepit Israel puerum suum, re-
cordatus misericordiae suae.

Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros,
Abraham et semini ejus in saecula.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui
Sancto.

Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et
semper, et in saecula saeculorum,
Amen.

Went to town the other day
(Merrily, merrily we play),
Met a Spaniard bright and gay
(This very day, o come away).
Merrily, merrily we dally.
Merrily, merrily we play.

"Listen, maid," the man did say
(Merrily ...)
"Gold and silver I will pay"
(This very day ...)
Merrily ...

-trans. James Erb

My soul magnifies the Lord.

And my spirit rejoices in God my
Savior.

For he has regarded the low estate
of his handmaiden: for behold, hence-
forth all generations will call me blessed.

For he who is mighty has done great
things for me: and holy is his name.

And his mercy is on those who fear him
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm, he
has scattered the proud in the imagina-
tion of their hearts.

He has put down the mighty from their
thrones, and exalted those of low degree.

He has filled the hungry with good
things, and the rich he has sent empty
away.

He has helped his servant Israel, in re-
membrance of his mercy.

As he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham,
and to his posterity forever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and
ever shall be; world without end. Amen.

Shema Yisroael

Sh'ma Yisroael, Adonai Elohanu Echod

Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God,
the Lord is One.
Thou shalt love the Lord thy God
with all thy heart, and with all
thy soul, with all thy might.

Deut. 6:4-5

Neue Liebeslieder

1. Verzicht, o Herz, auf Rettung, dich wagend
in der Liebe Meer!
Denn tausend Nachen schwimmen zertrümmert
am Gestad umher!

Give up hope of rescue, o heart,
thousands of boats already lie broken
and stranded.

2. Finstere Schatten der Nacht, Wogen und
Wirbelgefahr!
Sind wohl, die da gelind rasten auf sicherem
Lande,
euch zu begreifen imstande?
Das ist der nur allein,
welcher auf wilder See stürmischer Öde treibt,
Meilen entfernt vom Strande!

Can those on the shore understand your
plight?
No, only he who is himself drifting
helplessly.

3. An jeder Hand die Finger hatt' ich bedeckt
mit Ringen.
die mir geschenkt mein Bruder in seinem
Liebessinn.
Und einen nach dem andern
gab ich dem schönen, aber unwürdigen
Jüngling hin.

I have given away all my rings to that
unworthy, beautiful boy.

4. Ihr schwarzen Augen, ihr dürft nur winken:
Paläste fallen und Städte sinken.
Wie sollte steh'nin solchem Strauss mein Herz,
von Karten das schwache Haus?

Palaces collapse at your glance!
How then can my fragile heart survive?

5. Wahre deinen Sohn, Nachbarin, vor Wehe,
weil ich ihn mit schwarzem Aug' zu bezaubern
gehe.
O wie brennt das Auge mir, das zu zünden
fordert!
Flammet ihm die Seele nicht-deine Hütte lodert.

Guard your son from my charms, neighbour!
If his heart does not catch fire, your
cottage will!

6. Rosen steckt mir an die Mutter, weil ich
gar so trübe bin.
Sie hat recht, die Rose sinket, so wie ich,
entblättert hin.

The petals of the rose my mother gave to
cheer me are falling.

7. Von Gebirge Well' auf Well' Kommen
Regengüsse, und ich gäbe dir so gern
hunderttausend Küsse!

The mountains are sending torrents of rain.
I should like to give you thousands of
kisses.

8. Weiche Gräser im Revier, schöne, stille
Plätzchen!
O wie linde ruht es hier sich mit einem Schätzchen!

How peaceful it is here in the grass
with my sweetheart,

9. Nagen am Herzen fühl ich ein Gift mir.
Kann sich ein Mädchen, ohne zu fröhnen
zärtlichem Hang,
fassen ein ganzes wonneberaubtes Leben entlang?
Pain is gnawing at my heart. Can I
bear it a whole life long?
10. Ich kose süß mit der und der und werde still
und kranke,
denn ewig, ewig kehrt zu dir, o Nonna, mein
Gedanke!
I caress this girl and that,
But, sobered, my thoughts always return
to you.
11. Alles, alles in den Wind sagst du mir,
du Schmeichler!
Allesamt verloren sind deine Müh'n, du
Heuchler!
Einem andern Fang' zulieb stelle deine Falle!
Denn du bist ein loser Dieb, denn du buhlst
um alle!
Your flattery does not deceive me.
Try your tricks on another, you've
plenty to choose from!
12. Schwarzer Wald, dein Schatten ist so düster!
Armes Herz, dein Leiden ist so drückend!
Was dir einzig wert, es steht vor Augen.
Ewig untersagt ist Huldvereinung.
Dark and gloomy is the wood, my heart
oppressed.
Love shall never be united.
13. Nein, Geliebter, setze dich mir so nahe
nicht!
Starre nicht so brünstiglich mir in's Angesicht!
Wie es auch im Busen brennt, dämpfe deinen
Trieb,
dass es nicht die Welt erkennt, wie wir uns
so lieb.
Do not gaze at me so passionately!
All the world will know you love me!
14. Flammenauge, dunkles Haar, Knabe wonnig und
verwogen,
Kummer ist durch dich hinein in mein armes
Herz gezogen!
Kann in Eis der Sonne Brand, sich in Nacht
der Tag verkehren?
Kann die heisse Menschenbrust atmen ohne
Glutbegehren?
Ist die Flur so voller Licht, dass die Blum' im
Dunkel stehe?
Ist die Welt so voller Lust, dass das Herz in
Qual vergehe?
Bonny lad with fiery looks, you bring
trouble.
Is the world so full of delight that the
heart must break with misery?
15. Nun, ihr Musen, genug! Vergebens strebt ihr
zu schildern,
wie sich Jammer und Glück wechseln in liebender
Brust.
Heilen könntet die Wunden ihr nicht, die Amor
geschlagen,
aber Linderung kommt einzig, ihr Guten, von
euch.
You cannot heal Cupid's wounds, o Muses,
But you can soothe.

